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Digital Awareness, Digital Literacy Skills, and Digital Proficiency of Librarians in Qatar National Library

Objective. This study aims to determine the level of digital awareness, literacy, and proficiency among librarians in Qatar National Library. It seeks to explore the relationship between these variables and how they contribute to service delivery. Additionally, the study aims to formulate an action plan to improve librarians' digital skills, particularly in digital preservation, digitization, and online services. **Methods.** The study employed a descriptive-correlational survey method to gather data from selected librarians at Qatar National Library. A structured questionnaire was distributed to assess the respondents' digital awareness, literacy, and proficiency levels. The results were analysed using weighted mean averages and correlation tests to establish the relationships between these variables. **Results.** The findings revealed that the librarians had a very high level of digital awareness (mean of 3.29), digital literacy (mean of 3.29), and digital proficiency (mean of 3.25). Significant relationships were found between digital awareness and literacy, digital literacy and proficiency, and digital awareness and proficiency. These results indicate that the more aware librarians are of digital technologies, the more proficient they become in applying these skills in library services. **Conclusions.** Librarians at Qatar National Library are highly aware of and skilled in digital technologies, with a strong correlation between awareness, literacy, and proficiency. However, there remains room for growth in areas such as digitization and digital preservation. Action plans should focus on continuous digital skill development to keep pace with emerging technologies.

Keywords: digital awareness; digital literacy; digital proficiency; librarians; Qatar National Library; social media; technology integration; digital preservation; library digitization

Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital age, libraries increasingly integrate digital platforms into their services, fundamentally transforming how librarians operate and engage with users. The digitization of library resources has become essential for improving access and preserving information, especially in academic settings. Digital platforms such as e-research consultations allow libraries to offer expert assistance to students and faculty, making information more accessible. Udem, Okeke, and Onwurah (2015) highlight that digitization needs to be integrated into institutional policies to maximize its effectiveness, while Balogun (2018) stresses that digitization for preservation not only protects fragile resources but also enhances accessibility. This shift towards digitization underscores the need for librarians to continually update their digital skills.

The role of librarians has expanded beyond traditional duties to include promoting digital literacy and adopting new technologies. However, research by Spurava, Kotilainen, and

Holma (2022) reveals that many librarians lack awareness of their role as mediators of digital literacy, often resulting in restrictive practices. Ramzan, Asif, and Ahmad (2021) found that librarians' expertise in information technology (IT) significantly influences their attitudes towards adopting technological innovations. Despite the awareness of new tools, as noted by Edwin (2018), the adoption of cloud-based technologies remains low among librarians, pointing to a need for increased training and professional development.

Moreover, digital literacy is critical for librarians to manage modern information services effectively. Subaveerapandiyana, Sinha, and Ugwulebo (2024) argue that while many librarians possess basic digital competencies, advanced skills like metadata and software development are lacking. Similarly, Hamad, Al-Fadel, and Fakhouri (2021) emphasize the need for financial support to enhance librarians' digital skills, which are crucial for efficient service delivery in academic libraries.

Given the increasing reliance on digital technologies, this study aims to assess the levels of digital awareness, literacy skills, and proficiency among librarians at Qatar National Library. It seeks to explore how these factors contribute to service delivery and provide recommendations for enhancing digital competencies within the institution. This study addresses the gap in existing research regarding digital literacy and proficiency in Qatar's academic library context, contributing to the broader understanding of how libraries can adapt to technological changes.

The study aimed to determine the level of digital awareness, level of digital literacy skills, and digital proficiency of librarians in Qatar National Library. To achieve this, the study addressed the following sub-problems:

1. Explored the respondents' level of digital awareness in Qatar National Library?
2. Investigated the respondents' level of digital literacy skills in Qatar National Library?
3. Explored the respondents' level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library?
4. Analyzed whether there was a significant relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital literacy skills?
5. Investigated whether there was a significant relationship between the respondents' level of digital literacy skills and level of digital proficiency?
6. Explored whether there was a significant relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital proficiency?
7. Proposed an action plan based on the findings of the study.

Methods

This study utilized a descriptive-correlation research design to explore the digital awareness, digital literacy skills, and digital proficiency of librarians at Qatar National Library. A total of 49 librarians were identified as the population of the study, with a sample size of 44 determined using the Raosoft calculator. Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents with at least five years of service in the library. A self-constructed, three-part questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire focused on digital awareness, literacy skills, and proficiency, with face validation conducted by a panel of experts. Cronbach's Alpha was applied to test reliability, resulting in coefficients of 0.917, 0.894, and 0.933 for digital awareness, literacy, and proficiency, respectively.

Data collection was done through a formal request to the management and librarians of Qatar National Library, followed by the personal distribution and retrieval of the questionnaires to ensure a 100% response rate. The data was encoded in Excel for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics, including weighted mean, were used to assess the levels of digital awareness, literacy, and proficiency. Pearson's correlation was applied to examine the relationships between these

variables, determining if there were significant correlations between the levels of digital awareness, literacy skills, and proficiency. All safety protocols were followed during the data collection process

Results and Discussion

Analysis and discussion of the digital awareness, level of digital literacy skills, and digital proficiency of librarians in Qatar National Library are presented in the succeeding tables and textual presentations. The rank of indicators was determined based on the computed weighted mean, from highest to lowest. In case of similar mean values, averaging the rank numbers and dividing by the number of cases were done.

1. Respondents' level of digital awareness in Qatar National Library

Table 1

Respondents' level of digital awareness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. New technologies acquired by the library.	3.50	Very High	1
2. Emerging technologies for institutional repositories, cybrary, library websites, and WebOPAC adopted by the libraries.	3.36	Very High	3.5
3. Usefulness of ICTs in collection development of the library.	3.19	High	7.5
4. Clear understanding of the role, rights, and responsibilities of supervising digital activities in the library.	3.19	High	7.5
5. Ownership of information technology applications in the library.	3.17	High	9
6. Different social media, particularly Facebook, Twitter LinkedIn and YouTube, etc.	3.44	Very High	2
7. Awareness of new media technologies, but with limited or no utilization of the technologies.	3.28	Very High	5.5
8. Awareness of digital resources (CD ROM/DVD, Electronic records like emails, spreadsheets, Open Resources – e-Books and e-Journals, Images, Audios & Videos, LMS (Teaching& Learning Resources).	3.28	Very High	5.5
9. Awareness of the library's online document delivery system.	3.36	Very High	3.5
10. Digitization of print collections	3.11	High	10
Overall Weighted Mean	3.29	Very High	

Table 1 presents the respondents' level of digital awareness. Findings indicate that the librarians at Qatar National Library possess a very high level of digital awareness, as reflected by the overall average weighted mean of 3.29. This suggests that librarians are well-informed about the technologies currently used in the library, as well as emerging technologies that could further

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enhance library operations. The highest-rated indicator, "New technologies acquired by the library," with a weighted mean of 3.50, highlights that librarians are keenly aware of recent technological advancements integrated into the library. Similarly, the awareness of social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, which ranked second with a mean of 3.44, suggests that librarians recognize the importance of these platforms for communication, collaboration, and information dissemination.

Furthermore, indicators related to institutional repositories, online document delivery systems, and new media technologies also ranked high, demonstrating a broad awareness of digital resources and tools that can improve library services. However, the lower scores on the indicators related to ownership of information technology applications (3.17) and the digitization of print collections (3.11) suggest that while awareness is high, there may be gaps in librarians' involvement or confidence in implementing these technologies.

The findings corroborate the study of Chukwusa (2019) which found that librarians are aware of the role of ICTs in collection development, while Abdullahi, Gora, and Mohammed (2019) confirmed that librarians are knowledgeable about new media technologies. Furthermore, the findings of Yusuf, Ifijeh, and Owolabi (2019) indicate that librarians are well-versed in the use of social media, particularly platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter, for library service delivery. This awareness of digital tools is crucial for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of library services in the digital age.

2. The respondents' level of digital literacy Skill in Qatar National Library

Table 2

Respondents' level of digital literacy skills

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Basic computing skills like PowerPoint, word processing, excel, publisher, etc.	3.44	Very High	2
2. Advanced skills like metadata, software development, and coding	3.11	High	10
3. Electronic mailing, internet use, social networking, and mobile phone use are the major digital literacy skills.	3.69	Very High	1
4. Web OPAC, digital library, and institutional repository.	3.28	Very High	4
5. Navigating through and browsing the internet.	3.39	Very High	3
6. Searching databases and retrieval of text, images, and other multimedia objects.	3.25	Very High	5.5
7. Digital preservation and archiving of digital documents.	3.19	High	7.5
8. Electronic messaging, connectivity skills.	3.14	High	9
9. Cataloguing and classification of digital documents.	3.19	High	7.5
10. Conferencing techniques including teleconferencing, video conferencing, etc.	3.25	Very High	5.5
Overall Weighted Mean	3.29	Very High	

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Table 2 presents the respondent's level of digital literacy skills. Findings revealed that reveal that the librarians at Qatar National Library have a very high level of digital literacy skills, with an overall average weighted mean of 3.29. This high level of digital proficiency indicates that the librarians are well-equipped to manage and operate the library using emerging technologies. The top-ranking skill, with a weighted mean of 3.69, is "Electronic mailing, internet use, social networking, and mobile phones," highlighting the importance of these tools in modern library services. Other highly ranked skills include basic computing abilities such as PowerPoint and word processing (3.44), as well as internet navigation and browsing (3.39), which are essential for day-to-day library operations.

Skills related to digital library systems, including Web OPAC and institutional repositories, also ranked highly (3.28), demonstrating that librarians are proficient in using these essential tools. However, some areas, such as "Advanced skills like metadata, software development, and coding" (3.11), ranked lower, indicating that while the librarians possess strong foundational digital literacy skills, there is room for improvement in more specialized, advanced technical skills.

These results are consistent with previous studies. Hamad, Al-Fadel, and Fakhouri (2021) also found a high level of digital skills among librarians, particularly in basic digital literacy areas. Similarly, Mulat and Natarajan (2020) emphasized the prevalence of skills such as electronic mailing, internet use, and social networking among librarians, while Subaveerapandiyan, Sinha, and Ugwulebo (2024) noted the strong proficiency in basic computing skills, though advanced technical skills like metadata and software development were identified as areas for development. This highlights the need for further training and professional development in advanced digital competencies to fully leverage emerging technologies in library operations.

3. The respondents' level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

Table 3

Respondents' level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. Basic computing skills like PowerPoint, word processing, excel, publisher, etc.	3.44	Very High	1.5
2. Advanced skills like metadata, software development, and coding.	3.25	Very High	6
3. Electronic mailing, internet use, social networking, and mobile phone use are the major digital literacy skills.	3.44	Very High	1.5
4. Web OPAC, digital library, and institutional repository.	3.25	Very High	6
5. Navigating through and browsing the internet.	3.28	Very High	4
6. Searching databases and retrieval of text, images, and other multimedia objects.	3.33	Very High	3
7. Digital preservation and archiving of digital documents.	3.06	High	9
8. Electronic messaging, connectivity skills.	3.00	High	10
9. Cataloguing and classification of digital documents.	3.25	Very High	6
10. Conferencing techniques including teleconferencing, video conferencing, etc.	3.19	High	8
Overall Weighted Mean	3.25	Very High	

Table 3 presents the respondents' level of digital proficiency. Findings demonstrate that the librarians at Qatar National Library possess a very high level of digital proficiency, with an overall weighted mean of 3.25. This high proficiency indicates that librarians are not only aware of and skilled in digital technologies but are also proficient in applying them in their daily tasks. The top-ranked indicators, "Basic computing skills" and "Electronic mailing, internet use, social networking, and mobile phone use," both scored 3.44, highlighting the importance of foundational digital skills in library operations. Other areas of high proficiency include "Searching databases and retrieving multimedia objects" (3.33) and "Internet navigation and browsing" (3.28), which are essential for effective information retrieval and research support. However, the findings also reveal that certain areas, such as "Conferencing techniques" (3.19), "Digital preservation and archiving" (3.06), and "Electronic messaging and connectivity skills" (3.00), received slightly lower scores, indicating that while proficiency remains high, there are opportunities for further enhancement in these specific technical areas.

These findings align with the study by Khumalo, Rajkoomar, and Rajagopaul (2022), which highlighted the strong competence of librarians in basic digital literacy skills such as emailing, word processing, and information retrieval. Additionally, O. D. Bakare and B. M. Bakare (2021) emphasized that social media tools like Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp are widely used by academic librarians, further confirming their proficiency in communication technologies. However, the findings of Acheampong and Agyemang (2021) point to the challenges faced by libraries in Ghana, where a lack of skilled staff has hindered the adoption of mobile technology platforms, suggesting that proficiency in more advanced digital tools still varies across regions.

4. The relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital literary skill in Qatar National Library

Table 4

Relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital literary skill in Qatar National Library

	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Digital Awareness and Level of Digital Literary Skill in Qatar National Library	0.728**	0.000	Significant
	Moderate correlation		
**Significant @ 0.01			

The findings in Table 4 reveal a strong positive relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and their level of digital literacy skills at Qatar National Library, with a Pearson r value of 0.728 and a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that as librarians' digital awareness increases, so do their digital literacy skills, underscoring the importance of being informed about technological advancements in enhancing skill levels. Librarians with higher digital awareness are better equipped to apply these skills in managing library operations and delivering services.

These results align with the study by Chukwusa (2019), which also found a significant relationship between librarians' awareness of ICT and their attitude towards using it for collection development in university libraries. This demonstrates the crucial role digital awareness plays in driving digital literacy and effective use of technology. However, the findings contrast with those of Ramzan, Asif, and Ahmad (2021), where some librarians expressed confusion regarding the

ownership and application of information technology in libraries, suggesting that despite high awareness, there may still be uncertainties around the practical use of technology in certain contexts.

5. The relationship between the respondents' level of digital literacy skill and level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

Table 5

Relationship between the respondents' level of digital literacy skill and level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Digital Literacy Skill and Level of Digital Proficiency in Qatar National Library	0.871** High correlation	0.000	Significant
**Significant @ 0.01			

The findings in Table 5 demonstrate a strong positive relationship between the respondents' level of digital literacy skills and their level of digital proficiency at Qatar National Library, as indicated by a Pearson r value of 0.871 and a p-value of 0.000, which is lower than the 0.01 level of significance. This suggests that librarians with higher digital literacy skills tend to also exhibit higher digital proficiency, highlighting the critical role that foundational digital skills play in the overall competency of librarians in handling digital technologies.

This result aligns with the study by Subaveerapandiyana, Sinha, and Ugwulebo (2024), which emphasized that digital literacy is essential for enhancing collaboration, information retrieval, and social interaction among library personnel. Librarians who are proficient in digital literacy are better equipped to engage in various digital activities, such as instant messaging, social networking, and blogging, all of which contribute to improved service delivery. Additionally, Ahmed and Rasheed (2020) found that personality traits, such as extraversion, positively influence the acquisition of digital literacy skills, further supporting the idea that librarians who excel in these areas are more likely to perform effectively in digital environments. This highlights the importance of fostering both technical skills and personal traits that facilitate digital proficiency in library settings.

6. The relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

Table 6

Relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and level of digital proficiency in Qatar National Library

	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Digital Awareness and Level of Digital Proficiency in Qatar National Library	0.722** Moderate correlation	0.000	Significant
**Significant @ 0.01			

Table 6 reveals a strong positive relationship between the respondents' level of digital awareness and their digital proficiency at Qatar National Library, with a Pearson r value of 0.722 and a p -value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant relationship. This suggests that the more digitally aware librarians are, the more proficient they become in utilizing digital technologies effectively in their tasks. High levels of digital awareness equip librarians with the knowledge necessary to navigate and utilize emerging technologies, which in turn enhances their proficiency.

This result is consistent with the findings of Abdullahi, Gora, and Mohammed (2019), who observed a significant relationship between librarians' awareness and the utilization of new media technologies in academic libraries. Additionally, Rafi, JianMing, and Ahmad (2019) emphasized that the use of digital technology in academic libraries improves not only the technological skills of librarians but also those of the students they serve. Digital proficiency enables librarians to solve problems, increase productivity, and efficiently manage day-to-day operations, thereby improving overall service delivery and user satisfaction (Navarro, Masalinto, Galicia, Malabanan, & Palma, 2023).

Proposed Action Plan

Based on the results of the study, the researcher proposed this action plan to improve the level of digital awareness, digital literacy skills, and digital proficiency of librarians in Qatar National Library.

Table 7

The proposed action plan to address the weaknesses based on the findings of the study

Areas of Concern	Objectives	Strategies/ Activities	Person Involved	Budget/ Source of Fund	Time Frame	Success Indicator
Awareness in Digitization of Print Collections	To increase insight about digitizing library resources	Attend trainings/workshops/seminars about Digitization	Librarians	Administration	Yearly	Librarians successfully applied gain knowledge in digitization.
Advanced Digital Skills	To acquire advanced skills in using digital technologies.	Attend Training, Workshop or Seminars in Advance Digital Literacy Skills	Librarians	Administration	Yearly	Librarians increased the application of gained knowledge to the smooth delivery of resources and services.

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Digital Preservation and Archiving Proficiency	To apply learned skills from training or seminars about digitization. To preserve important library collections.	-Preserve or digitize valuable library collections. -Archives library files.	Librarians	Administration	All year round	90% of librarians can digitize library collections and have knowledge and skills in preservation and skills.
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Conclusions

In the rapidly evolving digital age, Qatar National Library has successfully integrated digital platforms and technologies into its services, enhancing access to information and preserving valuable resources. The study revealed that librarians at the library possess a very high level of digital awareness, digital literacy skills, and digital proficiency, enabling them to manage and operate with emerging technologies. The findings suggest that librarians are well-prepared to adopt digital tools and provide effective library services, with significant relationships identified between their levels of digital awareness, literacy skills, and proficiency.

The strong correlation between digital awareness and literacy skills highlights that librarians who are more aware of new technologies are better equipped to apply digital skills in practice. Furthermore, digital literacy plays a crucial role in building proficiency, as librarians with higher literacy skills are more capable of effectively utilizing advanced technologies. This proficiency is essential for maintaining the relevance of library services in an increasingly digital world. Overall, the results underscore the importance of continuous learning and skill development to keep pace with technological advancements in the library sector.

To maintain and enhance the digital capabilities of librarians, several recommendations are proposed. First, librarians should participate in seminars and training focused on digitizing print collections, as this area ranked lowest in terms of awareness. Improving this skill will significantly enhance access to the library's resources. Second, advanced digital training in areas like metadata, software development, and coding is essential for ensuring librarians can handle more complex technological tasks.

Additionally, librarians should practice digital preservation, electronic messaging, and connectivity skills, as these are critical for managing digital resources and improving online services. Ongoing exploration of emerging technologies will help librarians stay current with innovations that can improve library services. Moreover, librarians should embrace curiosity and fearlessness when it comes to experimenting with new technologies, applications, and tools, as digital proficiency is an ongoing process of personal and professional growth. These recommendations aim to ensure that the librarians of Qatar National Library continue to excel in a digital environment and provide outstanding services to their users.

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Цифрова обізнаність, навички цифрової грамотності та цифрова компетентність бібліотекарів у Національній бібліотеці Катару

Мета. Це дослідження має на меті визначити рівень цифрової обізнаності, грамотності та кваліфікації бібліотекарів Національної бібліотеки Катару. Воно має на меті дослідити взаємозв'язок між цими змінними та їхній внесок у надання послуг. Крім того, дослідження має на меті сформулювати план дій для покращення цифрових навичок бібліотекарів, зокрема у сферах цифрового збереження, оцифрування та онлайн-послуг.

Методика. У дослідженні використано описово-кореляційний метод опитування для збору даних від обраних бібліотекарів Національної бібліотеки Катару. Респондентам було запропоновано структуровану анкету, щоб оцінити рівень їхньої обізнаності, грамотності та навичок роботи з цифровими технологіями. Результати були проаналізовані з використанням середньозважених середніх та кореляційних тестів для встановлення взаємозв'язків між цими змінними. **Результати.** Результати показали, що бібліотекарі мають дуже високий рівень цифрової обізнаності (середній показник 3,29), цифрової грамотності (середній показник 3,29) та цифрової майстерності (середній показник 3,25). Було виявлено значні взаємозв'язки між цифровою обізнаністю та грамотністю, цифровою грамотністю та навичками, а також між цифровою обізнаністю та навичками. Ці результати свідчать про те, що чим більше бібліотекарі обізнані з цифровими технологіями, тим більш вправними вони стають у застосуванні цих навичок у бібліотечному обслуговуванні. **Висновки.** Бібліотекарі Національної бібліотеки Катару добре обізнані з цифровими технологіями і володіють ними, причому існує тісний взаємозв'язок між обізнаністю, грамотністю і майстерністю. Однак залишається простір для зростання в таких сферах, як оцифрування і збереження цифрових матеріалів. Плани дій повинні зосереджуватися на постійному розвитку цифрових навичок, щоб іти в ногу з новими технологіями.

Ключові слова: цифрова обізнаність; цифрова грамотність; цифрові навички; бібліотекарі; Національна бібліотека Катару; соціальні медіа; інтеграція технологій; цифрове збереження; оцифрування бібліотек

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